LABOUR MONTHLY

A Magazine of International Labour

Editor: R. Palme Dutt

INTO THE ELECTION FIGHT

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One shilling and sixpence

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BUOYANT

THE rise in our circulation began with the Election Special number in February, 1950: it never looked back. Obviously in the political ferment of election activity, *Labour Monthly* was found an invaluable guide—*during and afterwards*. I look for similar results to show in the months ahead, even at the new price. I was on holiday in Scotland as the first 1s. 6d. *L.M.* went on sale. A reader there anxiously asked me the all-important question: 'What will be the effect on circulation?' I could only reply that daily office bulletins showed hopeful prospects. Nearly complete figures now establish that circulation is buoyant, to use the phrase fancied in stock exchange circles; *it has gone up*. I can hear my Scottish friends: 'How proud you must be!' and —taking the words out of my mouth—quickly adding: 'But that's the readers' devotion'. A tremendous tribute indeed, this first stout-hearted response. Orders did drop, but were more than offset by special drives. Big sales among T.U.C. delegates and to trade union branch members preparing for reports back; keen interest among those active for peace, for, as 'Socialist Airman' writes of Andrew Rothstein's article *Soviet Armed Forces: The Truth*, 'after weeks of being deluged with anti-Soviet propaganda, it cut through the mental fog like a clear refreshing wind'; meetings of factory workers and political groups to plan a fight for circulation and organise sharing where necessary. And, not least, the individual reader. Examples. Back from the World Youth Festival 'I feel even more since my experience in Berlin that *L.M.* is an essential weapon, showing the strength of the world peace forces so necessary for us here. I'm fighting for a big extension in sales'. A Yorkshire reader, who has 'not missed an issue for 18 years' with an 'admiration and affection as great as ever', declared that the price announcement roused him. He at once worked out just what he could do; a list for specimen copies; back numbers returned, 'much as I hate to part with them': a generous donation as 'back pay' for a guarantee lapsed after he had left a war-time *L.M.* discussion group. From Newcastle-on-Tyne: 'A regrettable necessity under prevailing conditions. But it's part of the price we must pay to maintain a publication fighting the way to a world where we can *reverse the increases in the cost of the necessities of life*. It braces our confidence that better things can be achieved by people acting together, and traces the way forward'. Conscious of others, a Surrey reader sends an S.O.S. for the name of someone who can no longer afford it to whom she can pass on her copy. (Incidentally, one reader who received a passed-on copy for some time writes that he can now pay for his own, and encloses 'a modest two bob donation and many thanks to my good friend.') At a meeting which decided to become a Committee of Ways and Means, I was given suggestions: literature secretaries should collect 4½d. each week to soften the blow of a monthly 1s. 6d.: everyone deciding to give it up to be asked to find a new reader to share, instead of cancelling. Such efforts explain why the circulation has gone up in the *First Round of the Fight*. But this contest runs to far more than the regulation 15, and more than a title is at stake.

(Continued on inside back cover)

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Into the Election Fight

The announcement of the general election for October 25th has been made as the LABOUR MONTHLY *goes to press.*

This decision to call the election is a signal of the deepening bankruptcy of the war policy and of the consequent deteriorating situation in Britain.

The Right-Wing Labour leaders have sought to solve the problem of the bankruptcy of their own policy, and of the deepening discontent among their supporters, revealed at Blackpool and further threatened at Scarborough, by calling this election, in order either to carry forward their policy of rearmament and war under cover of a deceptive mandate, or to hand over to the Tories.

An extreme offensive of Tory reaction is now let loose to take advantage of the disillusion and discontent of the people in order to assume direct Governmental power.

Against this offensive it is essential to rally the united fight of all sections of the working class and the entire nation in order that, not only shall Toryism be routed, but the nationwide demand shall be voiced for a new policy which will serve the cause of peace, and the vital interests of the British people.

The people of Britain do not want war. They want peace—not in promises and professions, but in deeds, that Britain should take the initiative to negotiate now in order to realise a Five Power Peace Pact.

The people of Britain do not want to be crushed by the burdens of the rearmament programme. They want an agreed all-round reduction in armaments.

They do not want Britain to be made the pawn and colony and military base of American masters. They want the restoration of Britain's independence, that Britain should be free to make its own trade arrangements without restriction and build up its friendship with the other nations of the world.

The people of Britain do not want the prospect of endless worsening conditions which is held out before them as a result of the re-

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armament programme. They want to win the fruits of their labours in the improvement of their conditions and to go forward in the battle to become the masters of their country.

Every attempt will be made by the ruling central machines of Toryism and the Right-Wing Labour Party leadership to conceal the true choice before the people behind a smokescreen of misleading phrases and a hypocritical show of differences, when in reality they are united on all essentials of policy in the service of American imperialism and the war machine. Only the determined and militant struggle of all sections of the Labour movement can defeat these manœuvres and bring into the forefront of the election the real fight for peace and the living needs of the people.

The campaign of the Communist Party and its candidates represents the spearhead of this fight for a new policy, which represents the true common interests of all Socialists, trade unionists and co-operators and of all patriots and supporters of peace.

In every constituency the fight for these aims must be equally carried forward.

Let the united will of the people be proclaimed at this election to smash the offensive of Toryism, to end the American domination of Britain and to advance to a new policy which will save Britain and save peace.

Every other consideration must now be subordinated to these supreme aims in this election.

With confidence we appeal to our readers, one and all, to play their full part in this historic fight.

EDITORIAL BOARD.

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Notes of the Month

The Unjust Society

'Never, never, my dear Polyproteus, can a society founded on injustice prosper'.

SOCRATES *passim.*

MR. Strachey, in the intervals of gunning for Communists in the Malayan jungle or presiding as Minister of War over the bombing of villages and obliteration of women and children in Korea and the installation of American atomic bases in Britain for larger scale slaughter, has written a pamphlet on 'The Just Society'. The Labour Party has given wide publicity to this pamphlet in the hope that it will revive the flagging faith of socialists in the Labour Party who have begun to question the policy of the leadership. Here will be found no mention of the Atom Bomb, the Wage Freeze, the £4,700 million Rearmament Programme, the American military occupation of Britain, the rearming of German Nazis and Japanese militarists, or other unpleasant subjects. All is reverent and sacred to the memory of Keir Hardie. The publication of this pamphlet may accordingly be regarded as a measure of preparation for the

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Scarborough Labour Party Conference, whose agenda has revealed the rising storm of criticism from constituency labour parties. It may also be regarded, alongside the spate of publications of the thick volume of ' Campaign Quotations ', slickly professional streamlined illustrated 'Womanfare', the 'policy statement' with the engaging title 'Our First Duty—Peace'—containing neither a hint of peace, nor of policy, but only Rearmament and War—as part of the intensified preparations for an election. Accordingly, while awaiting the announcement of the decision on the election, we may profitably examine this new statement of faith of the Labour Party leadership.

Stars and Stripes ' Socialism '

Not without reason have Mr. Attlee and Mr. Morrison entrusted the task of explaining the ' socialist ' character of the policy of the Labour Government to Mr. Strachey. For Mr. Attlee and Mr. Morrison are too heavily engaged in fulfilling the numerous and exacting commands of their American masters to have much time for going into the minutiæ of the philosophy of socialism, apart from a few resounding rhetorical platitudes on the platform or audacious ' new definitions '. In the words of *The Times*

> Over two thirds of the globe, along the great arc stretching from Europe to Japan, no treaty can be signed, no alliance can be forged, no decision can be made without the approval and support of the United States Government. Only the great Communist block remains impervious '.
>
> (*The Times*, August 29, 1951.)

A startling statement of satellite dependence which might have given a fit of apoplexy to the old nineteenth century Thunderer. Britain, we are now coolly informed—not as some wild partisan assertion, but as a tedious familiar commonplace of the modern political situation—' Labour Britain ', ' Socialist Britain ' is only a planet revolving in the American orbit, in the American-controlled ' two thirds of the globe ', in which ' *no decision can be made without the approval and support of the United States Government* '. It is added, as an equally obvious commonplace of the modern world situation, that ' only the great Communist block ' is free and independent of American dictation. And the entire resources of the American-controlled two thirds of the world are now being mobilised under American command for war in the vain hope to destroy the independence of the remaining third. Such is the ignominious rôle of Britain in the modern world situation. Such is the abject task of the Labour Government—the real programme and policy behind the phrases. It is not surprising that Mr. Attlee and Mr. Morrison should find scant

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time to explain the relation of ' socialism ' to this programme. They have accordingly entrusted this minor task to their junior lieutenant, whose functions as Minister of War, since he has only to sign on the dotted line of the orders of the American Supreme Command, obviously leave him plenty of leisure to philosophise about 'socialism'.

Progress Backwards

Nor is the choice inappropriate. For it must be admitted that in his somewhat variegated political career Mr. Strachey has achieved one original feature. Hitherto it has been in the normal historical order that the grim experience of Social Democracy and its invariably disastrous outcome has preceded the subsequent disillusionment and exposure. Mr. Strachey has succeeded in reversing the historical order. He has first exposed the rôle of Social Democracy and of Social Democratic Governments as the servants of capitalism. He has then proceeded to enact the rôle himself—no doubt as a peculiar version of the unity of theory and practice, to complete the exposure by a laboratory demonstration with himself as the guinea pig.

Consulting the Oracle

Close on twenty years ago Mr. Strachey, temporarily shaken by the world economic crisis of capitalism from his previous dreams of indefinite reformist progress and evolutionary capitalism, salvation by currency reform, or Mosleyite New Parties, wrote his book ' The Coming Struggle for Power ', published in 1932, to demonstrate the bankruptcy of Social Democracy and Labour Party rightwing theories, and the necessity for Communist policy. He showed how in the period of the general crisis of capitalism Social Democratic or Labour Governments, after beginning with lavish promises of reform and improved conditions, find themselves compelled in practice by the requirements of the crisis to enforce capitalist programmes of ' economy ' on the workers, with calls to produce more, consume less, accept sacrifices, etc:

> Here, indeed, is a situation that taxes to the full all the arts of social democratic oratory. And yet, unless they are willing to undertake just this task of ' economy ', the social democratic Ministers must quit the stage—the very pleasant political stage. For an old capitalism cannot exist without ' economy ' (that is, the enforced economy of the workers). There is, of course, a third course of action—an alternative either to doing capitalism's dirty work for it, or of quietly quitting the stage: and that is to join in the revolutionary struggle of the workers to overthrow capitalism and begin to build socialism. That alternative, however, has never been known to occur to a social democratic leader. (pp. 306-7).

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Mr. Strachey certainly cannot be accused of showing any weakness today for his third alternative. Instead, he has preferred to embrace a 'situation that taxes to the full all the arts of social democratic oratory'—preparatory to awaiting a convenient electoral opportunity to hand over the unpleasant responsibilities to honourable Conservative colleagues and 'quietly quitting the stage'.

'Capitalism's Dirty Work'

Pursuing his argument that the essential task of Social Democracy consists in 'doing capitalism's dirty work for it'—so admirably exemplified by the Third Labour Government on a scale far exceeding the wildest dreams of a MacDonald—Mr. Strachey in the classic product of his brain proceeded to point out that the Right Wing Labour policy twists and distorts the working class organisations to serve the interests of the capitalists:

> The truth is that those very organisations of working class revolt, which the workers have gradually and painfully created over nearly half a century, have now passed over almost completely to the side of capitalism. Far from being an assistance to the workers in their life-and-death struggle, they are today by far the most formidable obstacle in the way of an early victory. They force upon the workers the immediate task of recapturing these organisations, or of freeing themselves from them and developing new and reliable forms of struggle (p. 338).

A somewhat crude and naive presentation of the alternatives, but nevertheless containing a recognition of the truth that the policy of the dominant Right Wing Labour leadership, of the MacDonalds, Attlees and Morrisons, of the Thomases, Deakins and Tewsons, does tie the Labour Party and trade unions to the service of capitalism and is thus opposed to all the aims for which the workers toiled and sacrificed to build up their organisation.

Communism for Britain

In conclusion, Mr. Strachey exposed the fallacy of the common assumption that Britain could be, because of its temporary special privileged economic situation and historical conditions, unsuitable ground for Communist development and in some peculiar way immune from the consequences of the world crisis of capitalism, from the common tasks of the working class struggle and the necessity of Communist policy as the only solution. On the contrary, he insisted that the problems of Britain could never be seen in isolation from the world situation (as 'if the British people were an independent isolated community, inhabiting a little planet of their own—and yet

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by some magical process able to draw their present imperial tribute') but must always be seen in the context of world development and its impact on the especially vulnerable economic position of British capitalism, and above all in the context of the British Empire, with the prospect of the advance of colonial revolt weakening the basis of imperial tribute, and that, seen in that context, the conditions of Britain pointed to the inescapable necessity of Communist policy as 'the only possible policy for the workers of Great Britain also':

> Britain is but an island in a sea which encompasses the whole world. No special providence reserves for her a peculiar destiny. On the contrary, her immense imperial possessions, scattered in every quarter of the globe, make it certain that her fate will be especially dependent upon that of the rest of the world. . .
>
> The truth is rather that Britain is quite peculiarly vulnerable to the reactions of events which may take place at the other side of the globe. Her whole economy is based to an unparalleled degree upon profits drawn from the exploitation of her Empire. Colonial revolts already menace essential parts of her system. The social reactions which are bound to follow the crash of the high-piled pyramid of her super-profits, may well be especially violent and sudden. If Communist theory and practice is the only possible policy for the working class of the world as a whole, then it is the only possible policy for the workers of Great Britain also' (pp. 382-3).

Stick a pin there and mark it—for Mr. Strachey's present war in Malaya is remarkably fulfilling his own prophecy.

Here We Are Again

Having thus refreshed ourselves from the source of the oracle, we are in a better position to appreciate the new wisdom of the latest pamphlet 'The Just Society'. Mr. Strachey has a perfect right to change his mind. Indeed, he has exercised that right quite frequently, and may no doubt do so again, as soon as he is out of office. It would be uncharitable to accuse him of inconsistency, when that has been his main political principle. What is more legitimate reason for complaint is that he makes no attempt to answer his own previous arguments. If he were to say in this pamphlet: 'Previously I believed that Right-Wing Labour policy is poison and ruin for the working class movement. Now I believe that it is the path to the millennium. My old arguments were as follows. Now I believe them wrong for the following reasons. My new arguments are as follows'—he could at any rate claim a medal for political honesty. But in that case the Labour Party would never print his pamphlet. For the contrast between the force of his old arguments and the weakness of

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his new ones would be too obvious. Accordingly, he makes no attempt to refute his own arguments. Instead, he blandly trots out the most fly-blown reformist fairy tale of the gradualist MacDonaldite transition to socialism, as if he had just heard of it for the first time, with all the ardour of a neophyte. He revives the Fabian Myth of 1890 in the world of 1951—under the very shadow of the menace of a third world war against socialism, a war for which he is engaged in piling up the armaments.

The Old, Old Story

He revives the Fabian Myth—but in a diluted form. The Fabians spoke of gradually, by the advance of nationalisation and municipalisation, and by the engine of taxation, finally ending capitalism and replacing it by socialism. Mr. Strachey is more careful. He defines the aim of the labour movement as 'social justice' (an objective equally proclaimed by Conservatives, Liberals, Schuman, Adenauer, Franco and the Pope, not to mention Senor Peron). He defines 'social justice' as the reduction of the total amount of unearned income from property, though not its abolition: 'the British people may wish to retain indefinitely some elements of unearned income' ('retain' is good); and payment of the worker 'in proportion to his work'. As the means to this he sees the method of step-by-step nationalisation: 'the object of nationalisation is to remove, step by step, the *source* from which the major unearned incomes are derived'. He admits that 'if compensation is paid, nationalisation does *not* abolish the large unearned incomes themselves'. The solution to this dilemma he finds in taxation, by means of which 'we have redistributed the national income'. As evidence of this he quotes the familiar manipulated statistics of the Treasury White Paper which seek to 'prove', by omitting indirect taxation and by a host of other devices, that the share of wages in the national income has increased since 1938 at the expense of profits—statistics which have long been exploded in the labour movement and smell to heaven worse than the cost of living index.

Watering the Milk

However, even so, the pure Milk of the Fabian doctrine is too strong and heady for the modern Mr. Strachey. He hastens to correct the dangerous misconception that the gradualist method of 'step by step' nationalisation may ever extend to the major field of industry. The Old Gradualists used to profess the ultimate aim of the 'nationalisation of the means of production, distribution and ex-

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change'; they only relegated the aim to an infinitely receding horizon. The New Gradualists have removed the horizon. Under the ominous heading 'Further Measures of Nationalisation?' (with a query mark), Mr. Strachey points out that

> the task is not exclusively to take over into public ownership this or that sector of the national productive machine . . . gradualism will be applied, not by socialising completely a small part of the economy, but by infusing an element of socialisation into the economy as a whole.

We hope this is quite clear. No doubt the Baldwin Government, when it established the London Passenger Transport Board and the Milk Marketing Board, was avoiding 'socialising completely a small part of the economy' by 'infusing an element of socialisation into the economy as a whole'. He further points out:

> As we all know only too well, the cost of living is rising. But not only is the cost of living rising; inevitably also profits are rising, and rising very fast indeed. . . We shall find, I am afraid, at the end of the year that the general effect will have been to undo some at least of the redistribution of income which we have achieved.

Thus the mythical 'Redistribution' appears to be also vanishing into the Valley of the Lost Horizon. This, he finds, is 'an example of the fact that in this vast job of transforming our society into a Socialist basis we can never stand still'. After some final references to the necessity of rearmament and a suitable rebuke to the 'reactionary' character of 'the Soviet system', he concludes with 'those marvellous words' of Shelley:

> Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent.

'*Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent*'. The quotation is not perhaps the happiest Mr. Strachey might have chosen to describe his political position.

'Spurious Socialism'

Already in the nineteenth century Engels ridiculed the 'spurious socialism' which sought to claim every extension of state ownership as a socialist advance:

> Recently, since Bismarck adopted state ownership, a certain spurious socialism has made its appearance—here and there even degenerating into a kind of flunkeyism—which declares that *all* taking over by the state, even the Bismarckian kind, is in itself socialistic. If, however, the taking over of the tobacco trade was socialistic, Napoleon and Metternich would rank among the founders of socialism. If the Belgian state, for quite ordinary political and financial reasons, constructed its own main railway lines; if Bismarck, without any economic compulsion, took over the main railway

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lines in Prussia . . . such actions were in no sense socialist measures, whether direct or indirect, conscious or unconscious. Otherwise, the Royal Maritime Company, the Royal Porcelain Manufacture, and even the regimental tailors in the army, would be socialist institutions.

(Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, English edition, p. 312.)

In contrast to this comic opera ' spurious socialism ' Engels stressed the real economic tendency of large scale capitalism to advance to monopoly and to state ownership as the highest form of advanced *capitalism*—prior to socialism.

State Monopoly Capitalism

Engels distinguished three types or stages of this process of advanced capitalism development: (1) joint stock companies; (2) monopolies; (3) state ownership. He showed how the forces of capitalist development

urge forward towards that form of the socialisation of huge masses of means of production which we find in the various kinds of joint stock companies. Many of these means of production and communication are from the outset so colossal that, like the railways, they exclude all other forms of capitalist exploitation. At a certain stage of development even this form no longer suffices; the official representative of capitalist society, the state, is constrained to take over their management.

This extension of state ownership, however, does not change the class character of capitalist society, although it can fulfil a progressive economic rôle in preparing the material conditions for the future victory of socialism:

The conversion into their joint-stock companies or state property does not deprive the productive forces of their character as capital. . . The modern state, whatever its form, is an essentially capitalist machine. . . The more productive forces it takes over, the more it becomes the real collective body of all the capitalists, the more citizens it exploits. The workers remain wage-earners, proletarians. The capitalist relationship is not abolished; it is rather pushed to an extreme.

The workers in the nationalised industries have been learning in practical experience the truth of this analysis of Engels.

Through State Monopoly to War

Lenin in the twentieth century showed how this development, of which only the first incipient forms were visible when the sharp eyes of Engels discerned them three-quarters of a century ago and drew out their significance, is enormously carried forward in the era of monopoly capitalism or imperialism:

Capitalism in its imperialist phase arrives at the threshold of the com-

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plete socialisation of production. To some extent it causes the capitalists, whether they like it or not, to enter a new social order, which marks the transition from free competition to the socialisation of production.

'A new social order'. This is the process which the social democratic theory seeks to distort as the beginning of socialism and the overcoming of capitalism. On the contrary. Imperialism is decaying capitalism, moribund capitalism, dying capitalism—but not dead capitalism. As Lenin said:

Imperialism is capitalism passing away, not capitalism gone . . . dying, not dead.

So far from being the end of capitalism, the development of the imperialist phase in the direction of state monopoly capitalism, with Social Democracy dancing attendance as its main agent in the working class, and even as its governing agent of administration, marks the extreme concentration of power of the financial oligarchy against all exploited sections, and the intensification of the exploitation of the working class. It is precisely this phase which bears its deadly fruit in the most hideous arms race and extending world wars, with mass destruction unequalled in the history of capitalism. And it is of this phase that the Attlee Labour Government has become the bearer, sacrificing the interests and living standards of the working class, and the independence of the nation, to the supreme aim of rearmament for a third world war. The War and Rearmament 'Policy Statement' (hypocritically entitled 'Our First Duty—Peace') is the practical counterpart of Strachey's 'Just Society'.

Non-Party Nationalisation

Such economic (and in modern times, increasingly economic-military-strategic) development of capitalism towards state monopoly proceeds equally under Conservative, Liberal and Labour Governments—and also under Fascism. The Asquith Liberal Government (nationalisation of the telephones), the Lloyd George Coalition Government, the Baldwin and Chamberlain Conservative and National Governments, all laid the foundations of the system of extending state ownership, state monopolies, public corporations and state control, which the Labour Government has carried forward. A full study of this process may be found in Emil Davies' book *National Capital*. Take the example of Sweden—the beloved 'model' country of Social Democracy:

The Socialists of Sweden and Norway are in a sense five years ahead; for when they came to power *the State already owned those basic under-*

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takings with the nationalisation of which the British Labour Government has been preoccupied . . .

It is commonly said in Sweden that *all the main developments in public ownership took place before the Social Democrats came into power,* and that the Socialists have nationalised nothing.

('The New Socialism: Sweden and Norway Set a Pattern', *The Times*. August 18, 1950—italics added)

Thus the very measures of nationalisation which the Labour Government and its spokesman Mr. Strachey present as triumphs of 'socialism' were carried out by *capitalist* Governments in Sweden.

Nationalised Sector One Eighth

Has the Labour Government at least *enlarged* the sphere of capitalist nationalisation to such an extent that quantity may be claimed to have turned into quality and to represent a significant change in the character of the economy as a whole? Not even that. The nationalised industries are commonly claimed to represent one fifth of economy, against four fifths for the private capitalist sector. Even this is an exaggeration, measured in terms of man-power. The total employed population in the country, excluding the civil service and armed forces, is just over 21 millions. The total man-power in the nationalised industries—coal, transport, and gas and electricity—is a little under 2½ millions. This gives a proportion of *less than one eighth,* or 12 per cent. The whole range of profit-making manufacturing industry is untouched.

Auxiliary to Capitalist Profits

Further, the nationalised one eighth is only *auxiliary* to the private profit-making seven eighths—to supply it with cheap transport and power. As the hard-faced City organ, the *Economist*, coolly calculated the advantage of nationalisation for the capitalists:

Without nationalisation coal would have been scarcer and quite possibly dearer; and it is almost certain that railway rates would be higher.

(*Economist*, August 13, 1950.)

In terms of capitalist class ownership of the means of production the change in this one eighth sector is only from shares to bonds—with a state-guaranteed return in place of the previously threatening bankruptcy of these derelict industries. As Dalton blew the gaff, after having to leave office in 1948:

As a result of our nationalisation measures already passed, gilt-edged stocks quoted on the Stock Exchange will soon have increased from £15,000

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million to £17,000 million, and 'other securities' reduced from £13,000 million to £11,000 million.

(Hugh Dalton in the *New Statesman and Nation*, February 21, 1948.)

It will be seen that the total remains £28,000 million in either case. There is no change in the capital holdings of the capitalist class. So much for 'drying up the source of unearned income'.

Redistribution Myth

What, then, of Redistribution? Mr. Strachey claims that 'we (i.e. the Labour Government) have redistributed the national income', so that the share of wages has risen from 37 per cent. before taxation in 1938 to 45 per cent. before tax in 1950 and 47 per cent. after tax, while the share of 'rent, interest and profit' has fallen from 37 per cent. before tax in 1938 to 28 per cent. before tax in 1950 and 25 per cent. after tax. A very pretty fairy tale. At this point, since we have invoked the spirit of Socrates at the outset, the occasion calls for a little Socratic dialogue:

SOCRATES: Tell me, Polyproteus—for I am growing old, and my memory is not what it was—when did the Labour Government come into office? Was it in 1938 or in 1945?

POLYPROTEUS: Why, Socrates, everyone knows that glorious date. In 1945, of course.

S.: Forgive my ignorance, and bear with me to tell me one thing more. Supposing a man should wish to try the virtues of a marvellous medicament, of which he has heard many famous accounts, and should therefore wish to observe and measure with great care his condition before taking it and after, would he begin his observations for comparison from the day he begins taking the medicament, or from seven years earlier?

P.: Most certainly from the day he begins taking the medicament.

S.: Why, then, my dear Polyproteus, do you and your friends always make your comparisons between 1938 and 1950, and never between 1945 or 1946 and 1950?

And here let us leave the Socratic clouds and descend to earth. For there is a reason why the official statistical jugglers and the Right Wing Labour propagandists always make the comparison between 1938 and today, and never between 1945 and today. The latter comparison would reveal a significantly different picture. Just as the war, and not the advent of the Labour Government, replaced the previous mass unemployment by full employment, so the war brought a nominal money inflation of the proportion of wages (alongside increased real burdens and shortage) and increased taxation of wealth to meet war needs (alongside vast undisclosed profits and capital

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appreciation), so as to give an apparent statistical picture of a sweeping change between 1938 and 1945. But the subsequent years, the years between 1946 and 1950 that is, precisely the years of the Labour Government, have in reality seen the reversal of this process and the gradual return in this respect towards ' normal '.

Dubious Statistics

Mr. Strachey refers for his authority to the White Paper on National Income and Expenditure, 1946-50. The White Paper gives no such figures. The old White Papers used to give this type of percentages, alongside many warning notes on their inaccuracy as a measure (warnings invariably ignored by the propagandists). For shame, these have now been abandoned. The White Paper does show an increase of trading profits of companies over three times between 1938 and 1950, as against wages only two and a half times. Even the table from which Mr. Strachey's assistants have drawn his percentages never refers to 'rent, interest and profit,' as he pretends, but to 'rent, dividends and interest'—a very different thing. By this little device the real total of rent, interest and profits is concealed and artificially reduced under this heading, which excludes the vast total of undistributed profits, more than trebled since 1938, and recorded at £569 million in 1950 (all owned by the shareholders and representing wealth gained by them during the year), as well as income through capital appreciation. On the other hand, the supposed figure of income ' after tax ' is an equally comic distortion, since it only takes into account direct taxation, which falls mainly on the rich, and blandly ignores indirect taxation, which falls mainly on the workers and which has more than quadrupled from £412 million in 1938 to £1,743 million in 1950. Thus Mr. Strachey's figures are worth exactly nothing at all.

Redistribution Backwards

A corrected table, making allowance for these factors, has been prepared by the Labour Research Department, and shows the following picture:

DIVISION OF INCOME AFTER TAXATION

(in percentages)

	1938	1946	1949	1950
Wages and Forces Pay	35	47	45	43
Rent, Interest and Profits ..	43	32	33	35

The truth about the myth of ' redistribution ' is revealed by this analysis. The main shift arose as a temporary wartime phenomenon,

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well prior to the Labour Government, when a high level of taxation had to be taken for war purposes, and the colossal fortunes made through the war mainly took the form of augmentation of capital. The Labour Government, so far from carrying forward redistribution in favour of the workers, has *reversed* the process in favour of the incomes of the capitalist class, and brought the relation back close to the pre-war ' normal '. It has been ' redistribution ' *backwards.*

Social Services and Taxation

Nor is it of any avail to quote, as the official capitalist and reformist propagandists love to do, the figures of social services and subsidies as equivalent to a ' redistribution ' of the national income in favour of the workers. The short answer to this was provided by the official report of the Marshall Plan Administration ('Report of the E.C.A. Administration to the United Kingdom ', published in the beginning of 1950; and reproduced in the *Economist* of April 1, 1950). This Report, on the basis of a detailed investigation, showed that the current ' social service income ' per working class family, taking into account social insurance, national assistance, family allowances, housing subsidies, food subsidies, education and health, amounted to an average of 57s. a week; while the current taxation paid by a working class family amounted to an average of 67.8s. a week. Thus, so far from the social services representing an addition to the income of the working class, they are entirely paid for by the workers themselves through increased taxation; and in addition the workers pay a further 10s. per week per family for the military, police and debt purposes of the capitalist class, to diminish the burden of taxation on the capitalists. All this is before the heavy increased burdens of the 1951 budget and soaring rise of prices. The true balance sheet of reformism reveals the reverse of the ' Just Society '.

The End of the Road

What, then, remains of Mr. Strachey's ' Just Society '? After the end of the myth of the 'advance to socialism' through capitalist nationalisation—after the end of the myth of the ' redistribution of the national income ' through taxation and the social services—what remains? Nothing remains but the real programme—the wars in Malaya and Korea, the £4,700 million rearmament programme, the surrender to the United States, the prosecution of strikers and the banning of the workers' May Day, the soaring deficit in the balance

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of payments, the renewed call for more and yet more sacrifices from the workers, the foreign atomic bomber bases in Britain, and the mad race to a third world war. Such is the true picture of Mr. Strachey's ' Just Society '.

Mr. Strachey's Two Voices

' Two voices are there ', as the poet says, ' one of the deep, the other of an old half-witted sheep '. One voice of Mr. Strachey may be heard in Malaya, the other in Britain. Or is it that reception is difficult? Listen:

> There was no whining or begging. They were given a few minutes to collect what they could. . . The hut burst into a slow explosion of flame and the family stood there and watched, ankle deep in all they had. That happened five times. Once a child started to scream. Others just stood, their faces marble cold. At the end of the line an old woman waited at the door of her hut. Her son crouched outside, his legs and arms like chicken limbs, approaching the slow end of his consumption. Inside was a climax of all poverty.
>
> (*Observer* report on British Military Operations in Malaya, September 19, 1948.)

No, no, that is the wrong record. Quick, turn the knob. Ah, here is the familiar voice booming over the scene,

> Our task is to give the people of the world the example and the hope for which they long.

Listen:

> In one month alone, in April, 1950, the R.A.F. has carried out 638 bomber sorties in Malaya.
>
> (Aidan Crawley, Under Secretary for Air, May, 1950.)

No, quick, try again:

> Big new rewards for the capture dead or alive of Communists of all degrees of importance were announced today. They ranged from £7,000 for the Secretary-General to £233 for an ordinary party member.
>
> (*Daily Telegraph*, December 16, 1950.)

No, no, not that one. Ah, here we are again.

> I believe that Keir Hardie has something very important to teach us. . . He can remind us of what is the true aim of all our endeavours.

Strachey invokes Keir Hardie. Hardie—that rugged if confused pioneer of socialism. Hardie, who, whatever his faults, hated and fought with every breath in his body the colonial wars of capitalism and died in agony over the Labour Party's betrayal of socialism to the imperialist world war. Strachey of Malaya invokes Keir Hardie. Could lack of shame sink lower? ' Mr. Strachey, Over the Body of

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a Mutilated Malayan Woman and Child, Invoking the Memory of Keir Hardie '—what a subject for the old Will Dyson or an Epstein, or an Altar Piece (in the Western nave, next to Noske) in the Church of Blessed Memory of the Saints of Social Democracy.

Not For Ever

The honeyed words may still deceive for a little. But the deception is wearing thin. It is not surprising that increasing numbers of the workers—and, above all, the socialist workers, the most active and progressive sections of the working class—are beginning to move into revolt against this disastrous policy of the alliance of Toryism and Right Wing Labour, and against the burdens which it is placing upon them. That revolt burst through the agenda of the Trades Union Congress and equally of the Labour Party Conference. The sounds of that revolt were heard at Blackpool. The threat of their being heard at Scarborough may yet precipitate an election.

From Blackpool to Scarborough

None can mistake the political landmark that was revealed by the Blackpool Trades Union Congress.The significance of that consistent opposition vote of around two millions, on one major controversial issue after another of domestic and foreign policy, for resolutions which were roundly denounced by the platform as 'Communist', carries its plain message of warning to the right wing leadership and of hope to the rank and file. Such minority votes against the wage-freeze preceded its final defeat and the Government's enforced retreat. Such minority votes against Order 1305 preceded its defeat and the Government's enforced withdrawal. The fight is now beginning to advance—all too tardily, but unmistakably—to the whole field of the American-Attlee-Churchill war policy and the consequent reactionary home policy. The Tewsons and the Deakins are proving weak reeds to stem the flood. Their only argument—to denounce every progressive resolution as 'Communist'—turns into a dangerous boomerang, when the only conclusion to which the subsequent vote could point, on the basis of their argument, would be that, if their allegation were correct, then two million trade unionists agree with the Communists. It will be for the delegates to Scarborough, alike from the constituency parties and from the unions, to see that the courageous challenge which was sounded at Blackpool shall be carried forward at Scarborough.

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Towards the Election

The fight for peace and the future of the British people; for the national independence of Britain; for the living standards and needs of the people; for all the aims of the labour movement—this is the fight which must dominate the coming election. This is the fight which must force its way past the deceptions and shadow boxing of the two Front Bench leaderships; which must rally the widest sections of the working class and the entire nation, equally to stand firm against the attempt of Tory reaction to return to power, and to sound on every side the demand for a new policy that shall end the enslavement to the American war machine and open the prospect of advance along the path of peace and the true interests of the British people. This is the fight which will be voiced by the Communist candidates. This is the fight which must make itself felt in every constituency. For it is only through the victory of this fight that Britain can be saved from the disastrous outcome to which the alliance of Toryism and Right-Wing Labour is leading. It is only along the path of this fight that we can go forward to the future fulfilment of a true ' Just Society '.

R.P.D.

September 16, 1951.

The Editor of LABOUR MONTHLY *will be very glad to receive contributions in the form of finished articles or of suggestions and data for articles. The customary proviso must be made that no responsibility is undertaken for manuscripts sent to him nor can he promise to enter into correspondence regarding contributions not accepted.*

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THE LEFT AT BLACKPOOL

QUÆSTOR

THE 83rd Trades Union Congress met at the moment of highest international tension and national difficulty since the war. The crushing burden of rearmament imposed by the U.S.A. was now openly dislocating British economy. The British people, who had put up with high prices and shortages, monstrous taxes and rising living costs in wartime, were rebelling against such costs in peacetime.

A number of trade union conferences in the spring and summer of 1951 showed marked successes for the campaign in defence of peace and the workers' interests. Unions totalling more than five million members had passed resolutions calling for higher wages, control of profits and other measures to reduce the cost of living. Unions with more than two million members had demanded Five-Power negotiations to end the menace of war and, in addition, the National Union of Mineworkers (another 600,000) had declared for closer Anglo-Soviet relations. Comparison of these figures, however, shows that there was a significant lag in one respect: public alarm at the consequences of rearmament had outstripped understanding that something is wrong with the policy itself. But these conference resolutions had been adopted in the teeth of bitter attacks from the right-wing office-holders installed at Transport House, in the T.U.C. General Council and the Labour Party Executive. Where progressive resolutions were adopted, it was thanks to a bold alliance between Communists and all other progressive forces in the unions, defying the name-calling and 'smear' tactics.

This situation was reproduced in miniature at the 83rd T.U.C. Yet because the Congress focused the burning issues facing the British working class within the compass of a single hall, so that the forces locked in struggle showed themselves in public, so to speak, visible to the naked eye, it left behind a changed situation. The balance of forces within the British working class was shifted, however slightly—and in favour of those fighting for Socialism.

Is this, perhaps, an optimistic conclusion? No one who saw the extreme nervousness of the platform at the Blackpool Opera House, at the end of the Congress especially, could think so.

Right Wing leaders did their utmost to bring into action all their resources in political propaganda and machinery of organisation. On the eve of the Congress (August 31—September 2, 1951) the

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usual delegation meetings were held to decide how to cast the block votes of the individual unions (before ever hearing Congress debates, of course), with the substantial body of full-time officials who constituted some 30—40 per cent. of delegates swinging wholeheartedly, for the most part, behind the right-wing leaders, while many others were still being swayed by anti-Communist prejudices. Forever classic will remain the now notorious chairman's ruling of Sir William Lawther at the miners' meeting on September 1 that, as the union conference in July had voted its confidence in the Labour Government, the delegation's vote must be cast against any resolutions on Congress agenda which, by demanding the correction of well-known abuses, might be held to be even remotely criticising the Government! On the first day of Congress itself, the presidential address set up a new low record of hate propaganda against the U.S.S.R., even accusing the Soviet peoples of being 'slavish'. It preached holus-bolus acceptance of the policy of rearmament and of the 'unavoidable' rise in living costs.

This was followed by another deluge of anti-Socialist propaganda —by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in a purely bankers' speech, concerned that too pressing demands by the workers might cause inflation and 'could be fatal to our position as a centre of world trade and finance'. That British capitalism under American dictation has already abandoned its position in *world trade*—accepting the Wall Street ban on nearly all trade with Socialist countries—and that as a centre of *world finance* (i.e. of imperialist monopoly capital) it was recognised by the Scarborough T.U.C. 25 years ago to be a menace to the British and all other workers, Mr. Gaitskell of course did not mention. This propaganda was backed up by further torrents of anti-Soviet and anti-Communist falsehoods. Tewson (General Secretary), Deakin and others repeated over and over again all the nonsense about Soviet armaments exposed in the last issue of *Labour Monthly*. With this kind of gutter propaganda went threats and insinuations and constant intimidation of delegates by references to 'certain people' and 'King Street' who, it was alleged, were engineering this, that or the other.

But how did the delegates react to these bludgeoning efforts of the right-wing Labour leaders? They voiced in various but unmistakable ways the instinctive revolt and deep-seated discontent of the workers they represented, breaking through the barrage in spite of all. An early sign was the cold and wary silence in which delegates heard the President's address, 'letting him down' whenever he

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paused for cheers. Another was their failure to applaud the unashamed Liberal and Tory platitudes mouthed by Gaitskell, confining themselves to polite clapping at the end. But above all there was the series of important resolutions which in effect were votes of censure on the Government: for its cuts in the health services, particularly on tuberculosis treatment; on housing and the need to reorganise the building industry; flagrant breaking of its pledges on questions like equal pay and toleration of yellow company unions in the nationalised industries; and especially in allowing the heavy cuts in value of Old Age Pensions, sickness and injury benefits and the like by rising living costs. This last resolution, moved by a leading Communist, Horner (Fire Brigades Union), in a fighting speech, was seconded by a leading non-Communist, Stilwell (Transport Workers) and chairman of the General Purposes Committee, and was adopted unanimously. Another resolution unanimously carried after two strong speeches from a non-Communist and a Communist—Stanley (Constructional Engineers) and Hammond (Miners)—protested against the reception of an ambassador from Franco as being not only an insult to the British people but a betrayal of all pledges.

This spirit of discontent was seen no less clearly in resolutions which the General Council succeeded in securing majorities to defeat. Real strength of feeling in the Congress was shown by the debate on the charges for dentures and spectacles under the National Health Service. No attempt was made by the General Council to meet the real point of the mover, Cardew (Medical Practitioners), that it would open the way for attacks on other parts of the health service. Instead, the old familiar Tory-Liberal arguments against Socialism were dragged out—assuring laughter from the Congress: that 'there is no unlimited fund for these things. Someone must pay'; that 'expansion of health expenditure would mean contraction elsewhere', and so forth. On a show of hands the resolution was adopted by an overwhelming majority: it was an education for the delegates to see this transformed by the General Council, before their very eyes, through the imposition of the card vote into its rejection (3,775,000—3,272,000, another 391,000 for the resolution on the Railwaymen's card being missing when the vote was taken). Thus all the intrinsic features of the Congress and of the general situation in the Labour movement were reflected in the debate: deep discontent with the results of Government policy, readiness to follow a bold left-wing lead, helplessness of the right-wing leader-

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ship in argument, its recourse to control of the official machine as a last resort and still insufficient work in the unions by the Left.

The same features were seen on the day of the main fight of the Congress, September 5. Gardiner (Foundry Workers) and Scott (Engineers) moved and Gregory (Electrical Trades Union) supported a resolution demanding trade with all nations, without discrimination against the U.S.S.R., China or the People's Democracies, and an end to American interference in this sphere. In reply Mr. Arthur Deakin argued against flour and timber from Russia because, he said, the price asked was ' the sacrifice of our freedom and liberty '. This pitiful substitute for an argument was exposed a week later by none other than Herbert Morrison who, in a speech at Washington, declared that trade of this kind was ' a real addition to our health and strength ', simultaneously with the news that a million tons of grain were to come to Britain from Russia. The Congress being over Deakin may now complain that Morrison has made him look a fool: and Morrison may explain to him that there are different degrees of demagogy. In any case, the block votes decided upon several days before were duly cast. The figure 1,795,000 for, 5,213,000 against, showed that a larger group of unions were supporting the plea for genuine world trade than had originally demanded the ending of the wage-freeze and of Order 1305 two years ago.

The same was the lesson of the prolonged debate which followed, and in which a composite resolution was moved by the Chemical Workers, Draughtsmen and Scottish Painters, demanding ' a new initiative in the interest of world peace ' by the Labour Government to secure an end to the cold war, general disarmament, abolition of weapons of mass destruction, control of atomic energy for peaceful purposes and increase of world food production on lines suggested by Boyd Orr. The General Council made this a vote of confidence by taking it as an amendment to paragraphs in its own report which reproduced a tissue of impudent lies about the U.S.S.R. foisted by the Americans upon the recent Milan conference of 'free' unions; and they filled their speeches with a flood of irrelevances, insinuations and mis-statements. As against this, the supporters of the resolution showed vigorous logic and were distinguished by the broad variety of their position: pacifists with more than a tinge of anti-Sovietism (Edwards of the Chemical Workers); ordinary Labour Party workers (Bullock of the Foundrymen, who, as a member of the 1950 May Day delegation to the U.S.S.R., denounced ' the most

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infamous libels ' about the Soviet Government leading its peoples to war, Smith of the Draughtsmen, Franklin of the Railwaymen, Edwards of the Vehicle Builders); and Communists (Grahl of the Fire Brigades, Bond of the Cine-Technicians). They were on the offensive throughout, and the General Council on the defensive.

In the debate on the rearming of Germany and Japan, the honours of debate were still more strikingly on the side of the combined Left —Horner (F.B.U.), Hitchings (A.E.U.), Figgins (N.U.R.), McLennan (E.T.U.), Darroch (Boilermakers), one after the other underlining that it is a case of rearming Nazis and warmakers; the defenders of rearmament were left with the sole argument that the Germans and the Japanese (irrespective of the class controlling the countries) must ' make their contribution to defence '. (Tewson.) Voting was: 2,608,000 for, 4,482,000 against.

Again it was the same pattern in the debate on the composite resolution deploring the constant rise in profits and calling for further wage increases and improvement of living standards ' at the expense of profits '. Moved by the secretaries of the E.T.U. and the Civil Service Clerical Association, the resolution secured 2,199,000 votes against 5,284,000. Almost exactly the same vote was cast for a resolution demanding that compensation to former shareholders in nationalised industries be reduced (2,080,000 to 5,301,000).

Thus a substantial vote of about two millions for a consistently class policy was cast throughout the Congress. This represents a powerful force and an achievement, compared with last year's vote of 595,000 on the Korean question, of still greater potential significance. Minorities have twice been turned into majorities at the T.U.C. in the last two years, on the wage-freeze and on Order 1305. But a huge minority like this in 1951 means more than its predecessors. The workers are learning faster; but they have still to learn. For example: the resolutions demanding East-West trade and a new initiative in the interests of world peace would have meant a break with the policy of subservience to Wall Street; the resolutions on improved standards at the expense of profits and reduced compensation rates would have meant a break with the policy of maintaining British capitalism. Many rank-and-file delegates, like the workers they represented, were still slow to realise the connection between the abuses they were condemning and the maintenance of ' mixed ' capitalist economy by the Labour Government. Many of them, too, were influenced by the six years' avalanche of lies about the U.S.S.R.

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ON THIS SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHINESE PEOPLE'S REPUBL

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'Check the aggressor, so that we can reconstruct our country!'

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Thus the General Council was able to swing Congress as a whole in favour of the policy dictated to Attlee by Wall Street and the Tories, and transmitted by him in the shape of extra burdens on the working class. But it is the new element, the element of change, that is important—' not that which at the given moment seems to be durable and yet is already beginning to die away, but that which is arising and developing, even though at the given moment it may appear to be not durable '. The ' durable ' framework of the right-wing leadership is getting rusty; more than once at the Congress it failed to operate, or operated with such a violent effort (when switching away from vote by show of hands to the card vote), that it exposed itself to the puzzled and often disgusted gaze of the most tion winning an indestructible loyalty from the vast majority of the people to the cause of socialism? Nothing of the sort. The fruit of moderate delegates. Real left-wing influence in the Congress, led by the Communists, was clearly ' developing ', in spite of the block votes against it: for all the delegates, even the General Council, knew that in its constant offensive it spoke for the growing mass movement for peace, for British independence of American domination, for Socialist transformation of Britain. Incidents at the Congress, and particularly the struggle within the individual union delegations, showed that much still has to be done in the factories, branches and union committees. But what the Left did at the Congress was an earnest of its great powers and of future victory.

ROAD TO ECONOMIC RUIN

RICHARD BRIGHT

AFTER the fuel crisis of 1946-47, the balance of payments crisis of 1947, after all the sacrifices that the workers were asked to make for ' their Labour Government ', after the wage-freeze, after the devaluation crisis of 1949, there comes what? The stable economy that had been promised? The new ' Welfare State '? Solid achievement, determined mastery of the forces of capitalism, practical demonstra- ' Labour's first five years ' is—in 1950 and 1951—the patent instability of soaring prices, disillusion and doubt, on all sides symptoms of a deteriorating economic situation under the shadow of war.

The full gravity of this situation is still not grasped. Moreover,

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the right-wing Labour leadership is deliberately playing it down. Gaitskell at Blackpool spared nothing in asking the workers to make sacrifices. But in doing so he grossly and perniciously misrepresented the economic situation that confronts Britain. He said that by the end of the year *externally* things might settle down, yet *internally* we could, on our own easily—by lack of ' moderation ' in wage demands—set off a new inflationary process. This is gross misrepresentation because it utterly misreads the economic instability of the capitalist world. It is pernicious because it suggests that the ravages of the threatening inflation can be blamed on the workers' ' lack of moderation ', when in reality the root of the evil is the Government's policy which has permitted Britain's economy to become slavishly at the mercy of an American-dominated world market.

At the present time the manifest symptom of the advanced sickness of British economy is the relentlessly rising prices. But, says the Chancellor, how can that be a sign of sickness? (This is how he argued in the Commons debate on July 26.) Are not prices rising everywhere? In the eleven months from June, 1950, to May, 1951, they have risen by nine per cent. in Britain and have they not risen by nine per cent. in U.S.A., by 10 per cent. in Italy, by 11 per cent. in Denmark and Canada, by 13 per cent. in Belgium, by 21 per cent. in Paris and, in the shorter period of June to December, 1950, by nine per cent. in Australia and six per cent. in New Zealand? Why, I know men, says Doctor Gaitskell to his prostrate patient, who are so ill that by comparison with them you are as fit as a fiddle.

He was, however, somewhat thrifty with the truth since prices are not rising everywhere. Did not he or his advisers read the *Economic Survey of Europe in 1951* recently issued by the United Nations:

> Complete state control over the larger part of the economy, together with the relatively small dependence on foreign trade, tends to place the governments of eastern European countries in a favourable position for securing monetary stability. (p. 139)

and that in the Soviet Union

> a series of price reductions has been decreed at the beginning of each year since 1948. (p. 140)

and that in countries of eastern Europe (excluding Yugoslavia)

> where a serious discrepancy between money income and supply of consumers' goods developed as a result of a decline in production (p. 142) inflationary pressures arose in 1950 against the general background of

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rising living standards and, therefore, the disturbances were of limited scope. (p. 141).

And, if they should care to consult the United Nations Bulletin for Europe for the first quarter of 1951 they would find that:

> In the Soviet Union a further decrease in prices, mainly of food products, by 10 to 20 per cent. took place on March 1, 1951. It led to a substantial increase in sales of consumers' goods (19 per cent. from February to March), though smaller than that of last year (49 per cent.) (p. 22).

The general picture is then of the whole *capitalist* world sickening with severe inflationary symptoms and the socialist countries lowering prices year after year as in the Soviet Union, or mastering the last remnants of a disease inherited from their capitalist antecedents and laying the foundations of a stable economy, of which one indication is the new zloty in Poland which is now not only internally stable but, being based on gold like the rouble, is stable also as unit for external trade in any part of the world.

When Gaitskell defends himself as he did in the House of Commons on July 26, by arguing that rising prices are not 'the product of action that the Government has taken or failed to take', he must be reminded that the action he and his colleagues could have taken —and could still take—is that of unhitching Britain from its economic and political dependence on America and the establishment of greater economic stability through collaboration, to secure essential imports, with the countries of the British Empire and with the Soviet Union and the new Peoples' Democracies in Europe and Asia as put forward in *The British Road to Socialism*.

We, when we talk of 'mutually beneficial economic exchange', mean durable and reliable arrangements for supplying each other's needs. We mean assured outlets for the goods we produce, as well as assured supplies of the goods we need. We do not mean high-sounding phrases about 'liberalising trade' to cloak grovelling obeisance before U.S. capitalist policies of obstructing and banning trade between east and west and putting all the countries of the world at the mercy of a market dominated by the American monopolies and rendered chaotic by the contradictions inherent in capitalist imperialism and by the distortions due to the war policy to which those contradictions give rise. The manifestations of those contradictions are very near to us. After three brief years of boom, the slump in the U.S.A. starting in 1948 and developing rapidly in 1949 transformed the situation. It came as an ominous reminder to the finance capitalists of America that there were grave and funda-

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mental weaknesses in their much vaunted way of life. This more or less coincided with the patent collapse of their plan to make China a vast American colony by the indirect method of subsidising Chiang Kai-shek. It was then that they turned the helm of American policy and began to steer full-steam ahead for war. By mid-1950 the U.S. imperialists had launched their first onslaught in Korea. The 'arms boom' began. Speculation was let loose and prices soared.

It is sometimes argued that, whatever else war expenditure may be, it makes for economic prosperity. It may be good for the profits of the arms makers, but there could be no more dangerous mistake than to suppose that it has any economic advantages for the masses of the people. Nor does it overcome the inherent contradictions and weaknesses of capitalism. On the contrary it is a manifestation of the deepening general crisis of capitalism. The phase of war preparations is, so to speak, 'a continuation of capitalist economics by other means'. The old contradictions remain, together with the old anarchy, the old antagonisms and rivalries, the old unevenness of development—only more so. The war drive accentuates them by distorting the balance of industry, throttling the consumer goods industries, restricting purchasing power and wildly inflating profits in some branches. The arms boom fever is a symptom of ill-health no less grave than the creeping paralysis of slump and unemployment.

We are said now to be running into a materials crisis, but what is this but an expression of the underlying crisis of the capitalist world? It reflects distortions due to war expenditure, the grasping monopolisation of supplies by the U.S. imperialists and the uneven development of production in the capitalist world.

The Americans have been sweeping up materials from all parts of the world to feed their monopolistic appetites ('hogging' was the word used by an ex-President of the Board of Trade). In the fourth quarter of 1950 they even became net importers of iron and steel, despite the high level of production in their own mills. The U.S.A. now (1950) takes 62 per cent. of world supplies of aluminium (pre-war 30 per cent.), 54 per cent. copper (pre-war 32 per cent.), 26 per cent. wool (pre-war 18 per cent.), 70 per cent. sulphur (pre-war 53 per cent.), 56 per cent. rubber (pre-war 50 per cent.), and 68 per cent. wood-pulp (pre-war 48 per cent).

> These increases in the share of the United States in world consumption and imports have made world demand even more sensitive than previously to fluctuations in United States industrial activity.
>
> *Survey of Europe in 1950*, United Nations, p. 82.

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As a result of devaluation of sterling area and European currencies the American monopolists got their raw materials at relatively favourable prices. In some cases—tin, wool, rubber and cocoa are examples—the sterling price rose sharply, whereas the dollar price remained stable or rose less sharply.

The British imperialists also have squandered the resources of their hard-pressed people in buttressing up their tottering empire. But the 'helping hand' of the imperialists has brought to the peoples wherever it has gone, not prosperity but chaos and poverty.

> The increased incomes will be unevenly distributed not only between countries, but also between classes. In the present situation the major share will accrue to Australian wool-growers, Malayan and Indonesian rubber growers (both estate companies and small-holders) and Singapore merchants, while the rising cost of living will reduce the real income of wage earners in manufacturing industries, salary earners and others who do not benefit from the export boom in the countries concerned.
>
> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

Nor is there a likelihood of the big trusts or foreign governments doing anything for the 'backward' primary producing countries.

> Both the financial resources employed and the increased imports obtained from Europe and North America have been, in the nature of things, unequally distributed . . . Only a small part of the total private investment since the war has contributed to the development of backward countries. The greater part of government grants and credits has also tended to be concentrated in a few main countries on the basis of special political relationships or urgent relief problems . . .
>
> *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

The Survey then reports that the plans made in 1950 for systematic assistance to some of these areas 'may be cut short by rising political tension and the rearmament requirements of the potential suppliers of credit and capital goods'. These facts strip naked the hollow pretence of the so loudly heralded Colombo Plan and 'Truman's Point Four'. The British Government talks loudly about creating prosperity in the empire ('as a bulwark against Communism', if you please) and the while is appropriating receipts into the accounts of empire countries for raw material sold to the U.S.A. in order to use them to balance the British dollar account. That she is doing this is evident from the recently published trade figures which show Britain is running into a heavy deficit with the sterling area (which is, broadly speaking, the empire), and is holding in its central account in London dollar funds paid to sterling area countries. Talk about increased prosperity when it is accompanied by

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actions that increase exploitation will hardly soften the antagonism between the imperialist power and its dependencies. Nor will talk about Anglo-Saxon friendship wipe out the antagonism between the imperialist interests of Britain and those of America. The points of conflict continually become more numerous and open. Successful imperialism offers the workers a few worthless crumbs. Imperialism on the downgrade offers them the privilege of paying for its failures. The blows that American Imperialism is dealing out to Britain must profoundly deepen the crisis of British economy. To take one example, the resuscitation of monopoly capitalism in Germany and Japan under American tutelage becomes daily more threatening for Britain. The Japanese start in on the old sport of grabbing British markets and, this time, sharing some profits with American partners.

> Conditions have been created by the expansion of the cotton industry under American sponsorship . . . in which dumping will be inevitable. Recent Japanese visitors to London and Lancashire, including bankers and industrialists, appalled their hosts by their attitude to international trade and in particular because they seemed to imagine that the Colombo Plan and Mr. Truman's 'Point Four' programme were specifically designed to provide Japan with markets for cheap exports not only of textile but of other light industrial products. *Financial Times*, 20.7.51.

Comparing U.K. and German exports during the six months from October, 1950, to March, 1951, with the earlier months of 1950, the United Nations' Economic Commission for Europe's Bulletin for the first quarter of 1951 states that German exports increased 70 per cent. in volume as against a 7 per cent. increase for U.K.

This is not a pretty outlook for Britain and it confronts us just when we are saddled with a vast arms programme. The American imperialists demand more and more arms production and threaten to make matters bad for us if we don't comply. But the full burden of the £4,700 million arms programme already promised has yet to be felt. Only half the orders have been placed so far. More materials will have to be imported for our arms drive and more will have to be paid for them because the arms drive in the U.S.A. and the rest of the capitalist world is driving up prices. Therefore there must be more exports to cover imports. But the main exporting industries are metals and engineering switched over to arms.

The declared policy is to fill the gap left by exporting textiles and other consumer's goods. The possibility of so doing would be very remote even in the absence of American-fostered competition from Germany and Japan. And in the presence of German and Japanese competition, what is Mr. Gaitskell's answer?

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Afraid to be frank in a bad cause, the opportunists use every device they know to play down the disastrous consequences of the American war policy to which they are betraying Britain. But the consequences are there staring us in the face. The lowering spectre of inflation as money is pumped out to finance the arms programme, with profits going up, prices going up, and the purchasing power of wages coming down. The spectre of a new foreign exchange crisis as the gap between imports and exports widens. And what is Mr. Gaitskell's answer? Is he concerned that Britain's economy is being wrecked? Does he not see what is happening? Does he not know what to do? Or is it simply that he intends when the crisis gets beyond control to go cap in hand to America? And what *this time* would be the price of ' aid '?

This is the situation in which the people must look for an alternative way. Such an alternative path is set out in the *British Road to Socialism*. Let them ask themselves whether there is any worth in the Tories' bright idea that all will be solved by a little more flexibility and higher productivity in industry. Let them go down Mr. Bevan's ' Only Way ' of a not quite so big arms programme. And let them also consider whether there is any better road to follow than the *British Road to Socialism* which declares:

> Britain should associate its efforts with the Socialist Soviet Union, People's China, India and all peace-loving countries to promote peace and international co-operation, restore co-operation between the Great Powers . . . should oppose all restrictions on international trade imposed by the U.S.A., and especially should promote East-West trade, which is indispensable for our economic recovery.

GEORGE ALLISON

With deepest regret the Editorial Board of ' Labour Monthly ' records the death of George Allison, an old and valued friend and regular contributor to our journal for more than 20 years. His first article appeared in our pages as long ago as January, 1930. We pay tribute to a staunch comrade and a wise, valiant and indomitable working class leader and fighter, whose example is an inspiration to all who had the privilege of knowing him and to the entire Socialist and working class movement.

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WHERE TORIES RULE—IN NEW ZEALAND

JOHN CARTER

'We aim to strengthen the laws against subversion, nurture sane, harmonious industrial relations, and to insist on compulsory conciliation and arbitration. In addition to compulsory secret ballots on strike issues, picketing intimidation will be made unlawful. Within the Empire picture we shall increase our defence contribution substantially . . .'

—N.Z. Premier Holland (*Daily Mail*, 22.8.51).

'. . . the ships and the wharves are the seamen's and watersiders' OWN workplaces. They are the ground, together with mines, freezing works and other industries, where the battle for trade union rights must be fought and won.'

—Statement issued by National Strike Committee of N.Z. watersiders, seamen, miners, freezing workers and drivers, July, 1951.

IT would be dangerous either to under-estimate the gravity of the return of the Tory Holland Government in New Zealand or to over-estimate the 'victory' that Mr. Holland has achieved in his deliberately planned attack on militant unionism. On the one hand the situation in a nutshell is that Mr. Holland has been voted back into office with what he regards as a clear mandate to go right ahead and attempt to create a Hitler-type Labour Front in New Zealand. On the other hand what the National Strike Committee said last July on the 149th day of the great waterfront dispute is still true: 'Neither capital nor labour can claim complete victory. The issue is yet to be decided. . . Only the abandonment of union policy by the rank and file and the repudiation of their fighting leadership would represent victory to the employers'. None of the elements of such a defeat for the workers exists. They remained magnificently united to the end and by forcing Holland to go to the country out of sheer desperation provided an important demonstration that there is nothing sacrosanct about the three-year term for which New Zealand governments are normally elected. Meanwhile, however, Toryism is back in the saddle—booted and spurred—and the course it is bent upon following must be seen in the context of New Zealand labour history. More especially it must be seen against a background of the essential and infamous part that Right Wing Labour leadership played during the 14 years of a Labour Government in the country.

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Holland's openly proclaimed decision to fight a war of annihilation against militant unionism is the third such planned and calculated battle that the New Zealand ruling class has precipitated. After the 1890 Maritime Strike the shipowners broke up the Maritime Council, the first national trade union. The second attack was launched against the Federation of Labour (formed in 1909 during a period of militant unionism stimulated in part by the visit of Tom Mann a year earlier); in 1912 the Massey Government deliberately provoked the Waihi miners' strike and defeated it with scabs. A year later similar tactics were successfully used against the watersiders who, with the miners, had formed the backbone of the Federation; and an organisation representing over 50,000 workers wiped out. Militant unionism had a severe setback; using compulsory arbitration to form scab unions won ruling class approval.

Compulsory arbitration was introduced in New Zealand in 1894 as the answer to industrial unionism and belief in the strike weapon. It provides that any group of 15 workers can form a union and be recognised by the Arbitration Court. Disputes are submitted to the Court and its award becomes law. It is not bound by evidence, pronouncements throughout the years having been notoriously in defiance of evidence submitted by workers' representatives, and there is no appeal from its decisions.

The result of the arbitration legislation was the formation of a number of small craft unions, often on a local basis. The secretaries of such unions became mere collectors of dues and advocates from time to time before a Court in which there was always a 2 to 1 majority against the workers' case. Ten years after the passing of the arbitration act their real wages were actually lower than before. By 1907 groups had taken strike action and gained wage increases and in the following year several militant (non-arbitration) unions, including the miners, also won wage increases through strike action. Then, as on so many subsequent occasions, the gains of militant groups forced the Arbitration Court, through its principle of fair wages, by which one group of workers is to be paid wages equal to that of a comparable group, to bring its awards into line. Here is the answer to the question why arbitration has had any success in New Zealand: it has acted as the medium through which the hard-won gains of direct action have been handed on to other workers. That is, it has failed to be completely totalitarian in enforcing its no-strike principle.

Compulsory arbitration was abolished in 1932 when the Tory

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government of the day found Arbitration Court awards a barrier standing in the way of its vicious attack on wages. It was restored by the Labour Government when it came to office in 1935, in spite of the past vehement denunciations of Labour leaders. The Labour Government, however, went further than simply making arbitration compulsory for unions registering under the act. It also made compulsory membership of a union to which a Court award in an industry applied. Compulsory arbitration and compulsory unionism were henceforth to become twin instruments for preparing the way towards the fascist Labour Front that Holland is now organising.

Compulsory unionism inevitably led to an immediate and enormous expansion of union membership, most of which became affiliated to the Federation of Labour. (The Federation, formed in 1937, was from the outset 'arbitrationist' in spirit and its executive has always strongly opposed strike action.) The strength of the trade unions was 81,000 in 1936 and by 1949 it had reached 260,000, mainly as the result of compulsory unionism. Thousands of workers were conscripted into arbitration unions with tremendous effect on Labour Party funds through union affiliation fees—the main source of the party's finances for the past 15 years—but with the most damaging effect on the growth of a strong, independent fighting trade union movement in New Zealand. The professional careerist trade union secretary exploited the situation to the full. It was a simple matter to muster the required minimum number of workers (15), register with the Arbitration Court and invoke the law to force all the other workers in an industry into the new union. In many cases the secretary ceased even to collect dues, employers deducting them from wages and handing them over to the union. Thousands of workers became unwilling, or even hostile unionists, attended no meetings, took no part in union affairs and thus enabled their officials to continue in office permanently.

After the war the principle of arbitration was extended to unions that had always held out against it—the miners and the watersiders. At the same time all State services, including the railways, were placed under arbitration tribunals so that at the present time there are five or six wage-fixing authorities apart from the Arbitration Court. However, as they are all 'triangular' the workers' representatives unfailingly find themselves in a minority. With their long traditions of direct action and rich experience of its efficacy, the miners and the watersiders have generally accepted compulsory arbitration with the clear reservation that the right to strike was not

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being abandoned. Other unions working under compulsory arbitration, notably the seamen, freezing workers, carpenters, drivers, tramwaymen and railway workers, have also shown that they do not completely accept any formula as a substitute for the strike weapon. A further increase in the power of the State to control the trade union movement resulted from legislation introduced by the Labour Government in 1939. This permitted the de-registration of a union in the event of a stoppage and cancellation of any award or agreement registered with the Arbitration Court. Thus the way could be cleared for the formation of another union which all workers covered by a new award would be required to join. In this way, and through its gaoling of strikers and its use of troops to break strikes, the Fraser Government provided all the legal machinery and precedents needed when Holland attacked the watersiders in February.

It was, however, the Labour Government's handling of the Auckland carpenters' dispute in 1949 that the Holland Government quite rightly cited as its precedent for the measures it took against the watersiders. A go-slow among the carpenters early in 1949 was answered by an employers' lockout. The workers, with support from watersiders and drivers, were clearly winning the struggle when the Federation withdrew its support, in a display of treachery and open lining up with the employers that was rich even by the Federation leaders' own standards. The Government deregistered the union and mobilised every possible part of the State machine to crush the carpenters. It assisted the employers in their open organisation of a scab union and finally, in the dying hours of the last Parliamentary session before the election which brought the Holland Government into office, passed legislation to make impossible the continued existence of the deregistered Carpenters' Union. It made possible Government-sponsorship of a 15-man union in a small town or area as the basis for an Arbitration Court award, after which a worker could be employed only if he complied with the compulsory unionism law and joined the ' new ' union. In this way the Fraser Government bequeathed to Holland a weapon, ready-made and already proved, to achieve the ' atomisation ' of national militant unions and to multiply still further what has aptly been described as ' the arbitration-fostered litter of numerically small craft unions '. For example, 48 new industrial unions have been registered in place of six deregistered during the recent water front dispute.

Another important development stemmed from the Auckland carpenters' dispute. The Waterside Workers' Union refused to with-

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draw its vigorous condemnation of the Federation of Labour leaders for their part in the dispute; the Federation ordered them to withdraw from the W.F.T.U. under threat of compulsion: the watersiders walked out. Altogether 63 delegates representing over 70,000 members left the Federation with the watersiders and the majority now are organised in a new T.U.C. The aims of the T.U.C. are industrial unionism, socialisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange and affiliation with labour federations abroad.

It is against this whole background that the recent waterfront dispute (a blatant lockout) assumes its full and most threatening meaning. The Government was, and still is out to wreck militant unionism and securely manacle the whole working class movement in New Zealand to the State-directed compulsory arbitration system. The whole nature of the Arbitration Court as a totalitarian instrument for regulating wages and conditions to suit the employing class is patent. Statistics indeed show that between 1939 and 1949 the workers' share of the national income declined from 60 per cent. to 55.6 per cent. and dropped further to 54.9 per cent. during the first year of the Holland Government's administration.

This is the nature of the battle that has been joined. It is of greater importance than ever before in New Zealand's history that the most advanced sections of the working class in the Dominion should rally the entire trade union movement in defence of its most basic rights. Nobody has been more brutally frank than Holland in linking the attack on free trade unionism with an intensified drive to provide more cannon fodder for an American aggressive war. The battle for trade union rights is the battle for peace.

The key to the future in New Zealand, as in all capitalist countries, is unity and the line of advance must at all times be towards organisational unity of the two trade union centres. The battle for unity must at the same time involve the unceasing and merciless exposure of those trade union leaders who are open agents of the Tory Government and the interests behind it. However, as Louis Saillant, secretary of the World Federation of Trade Unions, recently warned, there must be vigilance against a sectarian trade union policy which 'leads to confusing treacherous and anti-unity trade union leaders with those workers who, for many reasons, remain members of trade union organisations controlled by these treacherous leaders. Sectarianism in trade union leadership must be the prerogative of the splitters whom we are fighting'.

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FOSTER ON THE AMERICAS

WM. GALLACHER

I HAVE just read an amazing book—'Outline of Political History of the Americas' by William Z. Foster, Chairman of the Communist Party of the U.S.* It sketches the history of the Americas in outline, from the days of the earliest discoverers. It shows the ready friendship of the native Indians to the strangers who had landed on their shores, and the terrible price they paid in blood and tears for their simple trust. The Spaniards were merciless in their hunt for gold and precious stones. They massacred or enslaved the Indians and drove them with whip and gun to mine for gold and gems. It's a terrible story, the story of the Spaniards, in what is now called Latin America; but nothing so awful as what happened to the Indians in the Northern States, the States that comprised the U.S.A. Treaties were made with the Indians, only to be cynically broken. People in this country have recently expressed their horror at the language and the conduct of MacArthur and his successor, Ridgway, in Korea. 'Our job', they said, 'is to kill and go on killing'. But they were only following out what had already been applied to the original Americans. 'The only good Indian is a dead Indian', said Sherman, and that represented the key to the extermination policy pursued by men for whom humanity had no meaning. 'We want their land', so 'Kill, Kill! Kill!'

True, in many instances the Indians put up a tenacious and heroic resistance. But where they could not be defeated in open battle, agents were used to divide the tribes and even to get them to make war one against the other, and so facilitate the task of extermination. Now what's left of the Indians in North America, are penned up in 'Reservations', but they have never willingly submitted and with the many millions of Indians in Mexico and Latin America they will yet give a good account of themselves.

For Foster makes it clear, and this is a very important part of his book, that the Indians have time and again led revolts against their oppressors, and often outstanding Indian leaders like for instance Jaurez in Mexico, have played a tremendous part in the liberation of their country. As with the Indians, so with Negroes. Apologists for the slavery of the Negroes and the peonage of the Indians, have tried to justify this unspeakable affront to humanity

*International Publishers, New York. Collet's, London. 668 pp. 40s.

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by trying to persuade people to believe that the Negroes and Indians didn't object to such treatment. Nothing could be further from the truth. Foster gives all the necessary authorities to show that they did object and fought by every means at their disposal against the cruel, inhuman conditions imposed upon them. But, as he says, page 77, 'The basic explanation of why it was possible to enslave and transport such large numbers of Negroes from Africa was the existence of tribal disunity and internecine war among the Negroes in their homeland . . . . Thus, in 1567, Sir John Hawkins, one of England's earliest Admiral-Pirate-Merchant-Slaver types, while searching for slaves made an open attack upon a Negro village in Sierra Leone. But he got nothing for his trouble but poison arrows and a serious defeat. Profiting by this harsh experience, Hawkins had better success in his next slave-hunting foray by lining up with one tribe that was fighting another. He had learned the fatal device of enslaving tribal war-prisoners, a practice which eventually became general'.

The tragedy of disunity has persisted, not only among Negroes, but to a greater degree amongst the exploited working class. When they learn the lesson that history teaches and unite their forces it will be a bad day for the exploiters.

A classic example of what unity could do is given in a section of the book dealing with 'The Haitian Revolution' (pages 134-5-6). It is a truly inspiring story. Half a million slaves in revolt against conditions that had become absolutely unbearable. 'The Revolt', says Foster, 'probably launched by the Maroons from the mountains, was led by Toussaint L'Overture, a brilliant Negro, whose name and fame quickly spread all over the world'. The French tried to suppress the revolt in blood. The Spaniards took a hand. Both were heavily defeated. Then the British had a try. 15,000 troops were assigned to the task and 'only 1,000 remained alive when Commander Maitland surrendered to the revolutionists on October 1, 1798'. Napoleon who was 'then riding high to glory and conquest' ordered General Leclare 'to subdue Haiti'.

'After conducting a futile military campaign, to gain his ends he committed one of the most outrageous betrayals in all American history. Pretending to desire peace, he invited Toussaint to a conference, seized him, put him in irons and shipped him off to France. There the great patriot and fighter died in prison, in 1803'. (This 'outrageous betrayal' was similar to the one carried out against Wat Tyler the leader of the English Peasants 500 years

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earlier). It was a terrible blow to the Haitian revolutionaries, but they fought on with even greater courage until finally they forced the French to surrender. 'The Haitians, whose armies never numbered more than 20,000 armed men, had thus defeated the maximum efforts of Spain, England and France. Not even Napoleon, then at the height of his military power, could conquer them . . . . . After the final defeat of the French in 1803, the Haitians once more proclaimed their national independence, the first in all Latin America to do this. Their Independence Proclamation, signed on November 9, 1803, proudly declared: 'The independence of St. Dominique is proclaimed. Restored to our primitive dignity, we have asserted our rights, we swear never to yield them to any power on earth. The frightful veil of prejudice is torn to pieces. Be it so forever! Woe be to them who would dare to put together its bloody tatters'.

What a lesson is there for the American workers, for the workers of Britain and Western Europe. 'We have asserted our rights; we swear never to yield them to any power on earth'. With a voice of thunder this was once more declared by the workers of the Soviet Union, then by the New Democracies, and with an especial shock to the exploiters, by the mighty forces of Liberated China, and now the Persian people, to the consternation of the imperialists, have 'asserted their rights'.

One day the workers of America and of all other lands will join in this great 'Freedom Chorus' and the new world of Socialism will replace the utterly corrupt and dying system of capitalism.

And Foster, in this great work of his, makes an exhaustive study of the various upsurges of Revolt in the different Latin American countries, and their failure to complete the bourgeois-democratic revolution, by the expropriation of the big landowners. Between these latter and the part played by British and American investors, the economic development of the Latin American countries has been deliberately impeded. This has meant appalling suffering for the masses in the Latin American countries.

Poverty, in its most acute form, hunger, disease and early death, are their constant companions. The figures given are a terrible indictment of the ruling castes of those countries as well as of the British and American financiers. It has to be noted that the Catholic Church is one of the big Landowners and one of the most powerful forces of reaction.

On page 244, we read, 'Great Britain was the first country to

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begin a modern imperialist financial penetration of Latin America '. Latin America became a really profitable ' milch-cow ' for the British parasites. The United States came late into the Imperialist scramble. This arose from the fact that the North Americans following their successful revolt against Britain and the Declaration of Independence, were busy extending and consolidating their territory and their economy. A big obstacle in the way of expansion was the huge area of Louisiana held in the possession of the French.

On pages 206-7, we get the story of the Louisiana Purchase and the danger it created of a secession by the Northern States. However, this danger was overcome and the Louisiana Purchase was followed by the taking over of Florida and the annexation of Texas from Mexico. All the time the Indians were being tricked, swindled and massacred, and more and more of their land taken from them. But the more land that was acquired the sharper became the feeling between the representatives of the two conflicting economies in the United States. The Slave-owners of the South wanted the new territories as Slave States, the Northerners wanted them for ' free ' labour. The defenders of Slavery made some awful disclosures of the conditions of the workers in the ' free ' labour states, and argued that better care was taken of the Negro slaves than was shown towards the white ' free ' labourers of the North.

But with the victory of the North there was a rapid consolidation of the Northern States and American Big Business found more time to give attention to investments in Latin America and to the enforcement of the ' Monroe Doctrine '—no interference on the part of European nations in the affairs of the Western Hemisphere.

Steadily the Wall Street gang have been pushing into the rest of the American continent. But British imperialism is fighting hard to hold its grip on the life of Latin America. It's a losing fight. ' Our American friends ' are pushing Britain out wherever opportunity offers. And they have the ready service of the top leaders of the American Federation of Labour. These are amongst the most servile and unscrupulous agents of American imperialism. They are more capitalist than the capitalists. It was in protest against the refusal of the A.F. of L. to organise the masses of workers in the big industries that the C.I.O. (Congress of Industrial Organisations) was started and with a great unionising campaign built up a membership of 7 or 8 millions within a few years. Right in the forefront of this drive, as in all activities in the American Hemisphere, were the Communists. But with the passing of the Taft-Hartley Act, the

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Communists have been driven out of all official positions and the C.I.O. has now become but an echo of the A.F. of L. Between them they forced a split in the World Federation of Trade Unions, using Deakin to make the break. But this was worked purely and solely in the interest of the big moguls of Wall Street.

Foster's examination of all these manœuvres is very revealing and demonstrates the despicable role of Social Democracy in its abject subjection to the capitalists and its vile and murderous attitude towards the Communist and progressive forces in the various American countries. They boost Truman, Marshall and all the other representatives of United States big business, and Morgan Phillips, like a cheap dollar parrot, repeats them in Britain and Western Europe. What miserable mendacious creatures. Truman and Marshall provide millions for munitions, while millions of men, women and children on the American continent are literally starving. Their condition of life is almost beyond belief. Read this 'Outline Political History' and it will shock you with its revelations of cruel exploitation that condemns millions to premature death. Fighting against this monstrous menace to humanity are the Communists and Left Trade Unions. A fine appreciation of these is given as is also the desperate and dirty efforts of the A.F. of L., and the Catholic leaders of the C.I.O., Murray and Cary, to disrupt the progressive forces in Latin America. All at the command of their Wall Street masters. But they won't succeed. History is against them. In the clearest manner, Foster presents the two worlds—the world of corrupt, decaying capitalism, and the great new world of advancing Socialism.

On page 610 he quotes Gene Dennis, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the United States. (He has just gone to serve a five years' gaol sentence.) Dennis says, 'We Communists are confident that the day will come when the majority of the Americans will decide by their own free choice, on the basis of their own experience, and in harmony with their fundamental interests, to march forward along the road of social progress towards Socialism—that is, to establish the common ownership of the national economy under a government of the people, led by the working class'.

And that working class will include the 15 million Negroes, American citizens who suffer such terrible indignities at the hands of the murderous thugs who divide the labour of attacking progressives with the leaders of the A.F. of L. and the C.I.O. These,

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with the leaders of the Crime Syndicates, represent the 'Storm Troopers' of Wall Street, which, as decay advances, turns more and more to an American form of Fascism, even more inhuman than anything devised by Hitler or Goebbels. But this great book ends on a justifiable note of high optimism—optimism which steadily rises as you read through the pages of the book. Bitter pain and almost unendurable suffering, but always the spirit of revolt that neither massacres nor gaolings, nor torture can kill. Now there has arisen a party of a new kind—the Communist Party. Light, leading and guidance has come for the long-suffering exploited masses, and so Foster can finish his mighty labour—a great task well and truly carried out—with the stirring words:

'Fifty years ago Capitalism was triumphant throughout the world and the Communists were but a small minority among the huge ranks of the masses; but today capitalism is visibly rotting and the Communists are leading 800 million people into Socialism. This is the way the world in general is going, and this is the route, too, of the peoples of the Western Hemisphere.

'The great historical process that has gone on in the Americas for more than four and a half centuries since Columbus landed in the West Indies does not lead to the fascist, Yankee-dominated world of Wall Street, but to the new, free world of Socialism'.

And all who read his book will agree on that with my good comrade William Z. Foster.

30th Anniversary Message of Greeting

From the Secretariat, Central Committee of the Communist Party of India.

We are all deeply indebted to the *Labour Monthly* for the magnificent rôle it has played in moulding our political outlook, in acquainting us with international developments, in teaching us how to approach live and concrete problems in a Marxist way. The Notes of the Month, a regular feature of the *Labour Monthly*, were eagerly awaited by us ever since we entered the Communist movement. The *Labour Monthly* has been a powerful force in forging the unity of the democratic movement in Britain and India and in establishing close bonds between our two parties.

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HALF THE STORY

Revolution in Eastern Europe. Doreen Warriner. (188 pp. Turnstile Press. 12*s.* 6*d.*)

DOREEN WARRINER, already well known as a specialist on the economy of Eastern Europe before the war, has since 1945 visited all the East European democracies except Rumania. Here she examines their economies through the eyes of an expert. Her analysis of the development of planning and the planning system (Chapters V and VI) and of land and agricultural policy (Chapters VII and VIII) is of great interest. She exposes the current fallacies that the planning figures are eye-wash, that the plans are based on forced labour, that the policy of industrialisation involves a fall in living standards, and that the plans place too great an emphasis on heavy industry (pp. 109-113). She recognises the importance of collectivisation, and that 'it is really voluntary . . . the policy has been extremely well thought out from every standpoint, social, technical, and economic' . . . 'It is not a doctrinaire forcing of an unwanted pattern on to recalcitrant peasants . . . Technically, the results are remarkable . . .' (p. 162).

On other economic questions, too, what she has to say is of great importance. For example, she shows that 'Russia is putting more into Eastern Europe than it is taking out' (p. 166). Readers of *Labour Monthly* will welcome particularly her views on the need for increased East-West trade, and her forthright attack on the American embargo on many exports from Western to Eastern Europe.

Moreover, as an economist she recognises the truth of the Cominform criticisms of Yugoslavia in June, 1948. 'All the charges were true', she writes. 'The Communist Party . . . had merged itself in the People's Front' which 'represented predominantly the peasants'. 'The government could not take measures against the richer or middle peasants because they were the main force behind them' (p. 51). She also points out that the Yugoslav 1947-51 planned investment rate of 35-40 per cent of national income was 'utterly impossible' (p. 105), and that its over-investment in building such show places as New Belgrade 'is a sign of bad planning' (p. 114).

But Dr. Warriner does not limit herself to the economic theme, and half her book is an attempt to discuss Eastern Europe in political terms. Here she does recognise that the revolutions could not have been carried out in any other form. 'Had Britain and American policy prevailed . . . the institutions of democracy would have been used by the powerful and privileged as a weapon of reaction' (p. 172). 'In any Polish factory, or any Hungarian village today, there is far more local initiative and more local responsibility than there was before . . . there is far less gulf between town and country' (p. 173). However, her political account is as a whole very confused, and on the B.B.C. and in the press the reviewers have used this to condemn her whole work ('She has shown that these countries may be an economic heaven, but are certainly a political hell', they say). And by presenting her work as a pro-Communist, they have been able to claim that the New Democracies have a weak case.

First of all she shows that she does not understand Marxist theory by her attribution to Communists of such beliefs as that 'in theory, victory in the class war itself brings socialism' (p. 174) and that 'the absolute power of the Executive' which 'is the Communist Party' (i.e. the old story about the 'dictatorship of the party', which Stalin exposed in 1926) 'is essential' (p. 172), and by such remarks as 'the

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old type of sheer communist internationalism would not have worked' (p. 4).

Further, she looks on the struggle for socialism, led by the Communist and Workers' Parties, in Eastern Europe, not as dependent on mass participation, but as a brilliant and economically valuable policy, *conflicting*, however, with the nationalist aspirations of the people. 'If the Communists do become popular . . . they become nationalist'; 'the governments in the conflict with nationalism . . . may strangle the enthusiasm'; 'the dynamic can turn back on itself' (p. 174). Hence she sees the important change in Eastern Europe as merely economic, ignoring the social and cultural revolution and mass activity without which the political developments cannot be understood. Thus she is confused about the role of mass understanding in carrying through collectivisation, and sees the Cominform support for it in 1948 merely as a 'test' of 'loyalty' by the Soviet Government (!) the *credo quia impossible* (!) (p. 73). And her attitude to the Rajk trial is very muddled—she still asks such questions as why Rajk became Minister of the Interior in 1946, answered by the Prosecutor at the trial itself; 'the dossiers of the Hungarian police' containing the names of police spies in the Labour Movement 'are not at our disposal but at the disposal of the American intelligence service' (Trial report, p. 272).

There are serious weaknesses which make this a book to be read with caution. It is a reflection of the mounting hysteria of some academic circles in this country in the face of any publication of facts about Eastern Europe that such an eminent 'Liberal' as A. J. P. Taylor should declare that Dr. Warriner has 'besmirched the flag of freedom' by writing this moderate little book.

ALAN CARTER.

TRUE STORY OF WEST GERMANY

Cold War in Germany, by Wilfred G. Burchett. (258 pp. World Unity Publications. 3*s.* 6*d.* Obtainable from Central Books.)

BURCHETT represented the *Daily Express* in Berlin for over three years. He saw from the inside the events which led to the division of Germany, the setting up of the Federal Republic, and the Allied plan to rearm Western Germany as the base for a third world war.

One would have thought that such a book would be eagerly welcomed by publishers in Britain and America. They are publishing lives of the Nazi leaders and justifications of Hitler's war. Surely an eye-witness record by a journalist picked by a great national newspaper would be given equal facilities? The refusal to publish this book is the most significant indication of the way in which the facts about Germany are being suppressed. Burchett was forced to throw up his job and return to his native Australia before he could find a means of bringing his story to the world.

What a story he tells! After the breakdown of the Council of Foreign Ministers in January, 1948, the question of whether Germany should be completely divided rested on the ability of the four powers to reach agreement on a common currency.

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Had that agreement been reached, the clash in Berlin which led to the blockade, the air lift and the setting up of a Federal Republic in the West, might well have been avoided. During the early months of 1948 the Four Power Currency Committee was so near to agreement that final details were left to a sub-committee. Burchett records how at a dinner party in early March he was told by one of General Clay's financial advisers:

> 'It looks as if we can't get out of having a united currency now. We're in a devil of a jam. The Russians have agreed to everything and it's going to be as embarrassing as hell to wriggle out of it now'.

The Americans managed to wriggle out of it. Even though the designs of the all-German notes were approved and printing already started, the Western propaganda machine flooded the newspapers with reports that the Russians were insisting on impossible conditions and were planning to issue their own notes. Then a crisis was forced in the Control Council and three months later the American notes which had been stored for months in readiness at Bremehaven were issued. 'By this action', in Burchett's words, 'Germany was sliced in two as cleanly as if she had been divided by a surgeon's scalpel'.

During the Berlin blockade the propaganda was spread that the air lift was necessary to save West Berlin from starvation. Burchett quotes how offer after offer from the Eastern zone to provide full rations for Western Berlin was turned down.

He tells of the way in which the Americans used their financial control of Britain to dictate policy. He quotes documentary evidence to show that the failure to carry out the Potsdam Agreement resulted not from any of the propaganda reasons made by the West, but because both the Foreign Office and the State Department were determined to prevent the genuine break-up of international cartels. Finally, Burchett gives his personal experiences of the way militarisation and denazification were carried out in the Eastern zone and the way fascism and anti-semitism are coming back in the West. This is one of the most valuable books to be published since the war. An understanding on the part of the peoples of the West of the basic reasons for the division of Germany can still prevent the re-creation of a new Nazi Reich with its inevitable corollary of a third world war.

GORDON SCHAFFER.

NOVEL ABOUT INDIA

The Stones of Bombay, by David Martin. (223 pp. Wingate, 9*s.* 6*d.*)

IN this novel about life in contemporary India, the author has treated the subject with skill, insight and realism. Setting his scene in Bombay, the author has given us a valuable artistic picture of social and political conditions in India after the Mountbatten Settlement of August, 1947, though obviously the rural aspect is not within his purview.

Various characters from all walks of life are introduced and delicately interwoven in the plot. To mention but a few—the hero Shankar, a motor mechanic and a refugee from Pakistan; Pandit Gokul Bhatt, the typical Congress-cum-businessman-newspaper-magnate (who 'had contemplated taking a second wife' . . . but . . . 'two wives would have been an embarrassment for a man in politics, especially for a Congressman. Gandhiji, certainly, would not have approved'); Swami Krishnaswami Brahmatirth, the saint and philanthropist, with his two goats, who finds himself in a hopeless contradiction in the hands of the cunning Pandit Gokul Bhatt; the quack 'doctor' Rajendra Singh with his 'rejuvenating' pills and a host of

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testimonials from zamindars and Maharajahs most of which 'he had written himself but nobody had ever dared to question their authenticity'; and last but not least, in this myriad pattern of contemporary Indian life, the progressives, the communists and the artists in the Indian People's Theatre working strenuously to bring about a just order of things. The author, be it noted, a foreigner to India, has depicted these characters with so much sympathy, understanding, realism and very often bitter sarcasm that one is tempted to ask whether he is really *foreign* to our soil. It is no doubt the love of the common people, integrated with an objective grasp of the Indian situation and life, which has enabled the author to break the barriers of frontiers, customs and conventions.

Disgusted by the nepotism and corruption of vested interests and through personal contacts, Shankar joins the Communist Party of India. There he at last finds an atmosphere of genuine friendship and fraternity. In the course of his discussions with other members of the Communist Party, some fundamental questions of the Indian democratic movement today are raised by the author and dealt with in a vivid fashion:

> 'But it is not like China?' Shankar put in . . . 'No, naturally. It does not happen everywhere at the same time. But that is not because we are cowards. The British organised things well; people got seven years for hiding an old shotgun. In China there were wars; the country was littered with arms. Here the foreigners, with their technique, sat on our necks, held us down. They have handed it all over, babus and guns, to the new masters. And the people are still drunk with this "independence". After all, they fought for it! When you get at last what you wanted so much, then you will not easily believe that you have been cheated, that you have, after all the sacrifices, not gained what you struggled for. You will even be angry with the man who shows it to you, explains it'.

One friendly note of criticism. The statement on p. 131 that 'India had a more highly developed and more self-confident middle class than any of her colonial or semi-colonial neighbours . . the British had handed the country over *to this class*' (my italics) is likely to promote the illusion that the Indian bourgeoisie as a class have secured 'freedom' for themselves from the imperialist stranglehold. It is probable that this error has crept in as a reflection of the similar types of illusions from which the progressive movement in India was suffering until very recently and which have now been solved.

The author deserves heartiest congratulations from all Indian patriots and friends of India abroad. It is to be hoped that this novel will have a wide circulation both inside and outside India, and will probably be translated into Indian vernacular languages.

DILIP KUMAR BOSE.

SHORTER NOTICE

Kashmir and the Conspiracy against Peace, by Rajbans Krishen (108 pp., People's Publishing House, Ltd., Bombay, price *Rs.*5.)

THE publication of this useful and well-documented book on the present Kashmir tangle by a young active worker of Kashmir's national movement is timely.

The story of the intrigues of the imperialists in Kashmir, their efforts to preserve for themselves the highly strategically important area of Gilgit, bordering on Soviet Union, China and Afghanistan, the various *pourparlers* and backstair plots hatched at Lake Success, the single-handed fight of the Czech member of the Com-

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mission and later of the Soviet representative at the Security Council—all these have been admirably traced in the first ten chapters.

The last chapter dealing with the future prospects of Kashmir exhorts the popular movement in Kashmir, India and Pakistan to demand a 'plebiscite under the supervision of a Big-Five Commission, including the U.S.S.R. and People's China,' as the only basis of a democratic and peaceful solution.

D.K.B.

FROM THE *LABOUR MONTHLY* OF 25 YEARS AGO

THE LEFT IN THE GENERAL STRIKE

WITHIN twenty-four hours of shedding the distinguishing marks of the broad arrow I am asked to write a short message for the *Labour Monthly*. I cannot do better than to ask its readers and critics at the present stage of the working class movement to reflect upon what has been the central theme of the *Labour Monthly* since its inception, and to examine it in the light of the tremendous happenings of this year, culminating in the General Strike. . .

In particular does one recall at this juncture the attempts of the *Labour Monthly* to make the so-called 'Left' leaders face up to the situation, warning them that if they were not prepared to fight the reformists and place their trust in the revolutionary class-consciousness of the masses that they too would have to share in any debacle that came along. In this connection I think I cannot do better than to give the thoughts that ran in my mind immediately I heard in prison that the General Strike had been called. I thought then of a series of articles in the *Labour Monthly* in 1924 in which Comrades Purcell, Hutchinson, Cook, Lawther, Williams, Bromley and Hicks took part, and what a difference there would, and could have been in the whole official direction of the Movement if these comrades had then been prepared to organise their forces definitely, and fight for the realisation of the new policy upon which there was at least a common agreement. That was, a common struggle, workshop organisation, extension of the scope of the Trades Councils, and the creation of a more powerful General Council. But the campaign of this 'Left' bloc stopped at article writing. The result is known to all. When the call came the workers responded to a man, but the existing leadership failed, and in the moment of failure there was no difference between the Rights and the Lefts. This was a complete justification of the whole attitude of the *Labour Monthly* right from its inception.

From *A Message from Harry Pollitt*, October, 1926.

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I have had absorbing letters from some of the countries where 'the Dark Ages have emerged again', to quote a South African correspondent. A progressive U.S. trade union organiser in the Deep South describes appalling economic conditions and political persecution. He thinks himself lucky: 'My experiences only include blacklisting, character-assassination and secret police harassment. The American warmakers and their lackeys are desperate to wipe out all voicing opposition in the unions. For the working class itself is receptive to a program for trade union unity against war, and between Negro and white; they are opposed to the munitions race with its outrageous high prices and wage freeze. The tax burden has become almost unbearable and yet Wall Street politicians clamour for higher taxes. It's getting once more to be "taxation without representation", with Washington replacing George III'. (A.F.L. fraternal delegates, please note.)

The fund total for August went up, too. One of many returning back numbers, a Londoner enclosed a £1 note, sure that we 'can use it with paper at its present price'. Then a clergyman sends 'a mere drop, but it shall fall as frequently as possible'; 'Socialist Airman' says he's still waiting for a Welshman to rescue Merthyr Tydfil; and an old guarantor back again after a time in which 'it rained difficulties so thick and fast there was no time to duck—like a mine roof, all a-work, and you wonder where it'll come in next'. In all

£68 11s. 8d.

Birthday presents received up to August 31, previously acknowledged, £89 16s: 'Exeter', £5; S. McCulloch, £1; Total to date, £95 16s.

Stand-in money came from 'Exeter' for Birmingham, Coventry, Crediton, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Norwich, Southampton, Turton (Lancs.) and Weymouth (with arrears), £4; 'Islington', standing-in for 'St. Pancras', 3s; 'Socialist Airman', standing-in for Merthyr Tydfil, 1s; 'Billie', standing-in for Tonypandy 'in memory of Lewis Jones', 1s; D. Mayo, standing-in for Plymouth and Rottingdean, 2s; J. Tuckett, standing-in for Manchester, 1s; F.C. (U.S.A.), standing-in for Cheltenham (pre-paid).

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Other contributions include: 'For Peter's picture', 5s; Belsize and South End Branches' collection, 17s 7d; J. N. F. Newall, 4s; A. D. Bush, £1 8s; Anon. I, 8s; J. J. Murphy, £1; A.Hampton,3s; E. Blaxell, 8s; R.M.G., 3s; Anon. II, £5; J. H. Drummond, 8s; J. Peterson, 8s; C. Ford, £1 1s; A.G.G. (Canada), 10s; K.D.P. (Canada), 17s; S. Westwood, 5s; A. J. Salmon, 1s; Anon. III, £1; A. G. Perkins, 3s; B.R. (New Zealand), £1 9s; J. Duffy, £1; O. Ford, 8s; E. M. Addyman, 3s; M. C. Thomas, 8s; A. A. Wills, 8s; A. Allen, 3s; 'Yorkshire Teacher', 5s; E. Whelen, 8s; G. Driver, 7s; J. M. Burnett, 8s; J. H. Wilson, 1s 6d; F. Richardson, 8s; A.W.K., 8s; V.J.T. (U.S.A.), 14s 2d; F. O. Gubb, 5s; T. Fitzgerald, 2s; H.S.R., 2s; R. Deer, £1 5s; W. S. Woolner, 5s; A Rumanian Sympathiser, £1; P. H. W. Loaring, 4s; H.G.D. (U.S.A.), £1 17s; M.S. (U.S.A.), 8s 5d; G.B. (U.S.A.), 14s; B.W.H. (U.S.A.), £2 9s.

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